

cated above, are related to the form of the organism, is very obscure.—FRANCIS E. LLOYD.

## CORRESPONDENCE

EDITOR OF TORREYA.

*Dear Sir:* The attention of the Natural Science Committee of the Associate Alumnae of the Normal College has been called to the article which appeared in the August number of TORREYA, entitled "Vanishing Wild Flowers." In that article the work of the Committee is spoken of at considerable length, and inasmuch as it is mentioned in such reprehensible company that the mere statements without explanation might lead the reader to mistaken conclusions, the Committee respectfully requests that you will kindly publish the following in your next issue :

Could the school children have the opportunity "to learn to know the flowers by name and enjoy them" as the writer of "Vanishing Wild Flowers" suggests, there would be no need of our work at all. Unfortunately, the facts are that thousands of children never have that opportunity as the following statistics prove. Out of a class of fifty-five only one knew the clover; of a class of thirty-four three did not know the daisy, twelve the dandelion; of another class seven did not know the buttercup, and of a class of thirty-five not one knew a violet. From data carefully collected we found that forty per cent. of one entire school had never been to the country and twenty-five per cent. had never even visited Central Park. It is for these unfortunates that we hold our flower shows.

The commonest flowers are wonderful to them and we make special efforts to get these in quantity and also the flowers mentioned in the poems studied in school. It was for the latter reason that we were anxious to obtain the fringed gentians. We would like to state that those mentioned in the article in question were collected in the course of a long drive, were carefully cut, and only a few were taken from each locality.

Likewise, the pitcher plants referred to were gathered from a deserted cranberry bog at Plymouth, Mass., where the supply

was practically limitless; the plants were not missed from the bog and brought pleasure untold to many a New York classroom where they were kept for months.

The holly referred to was sent from South Carolina, while all the club-mosses that the Committee has distributed have come from Canada and Lake George. The barrels and boxes of material that seem to have raised apprehension were quite innocent; with the exception of one barrel filled with daisies, they contained cones, nuts, various dried fruits and shells.

The "twenty baskets a week sent to the vacation schools" were filled almost entirely with garden flowers, the common garden vegetables, showing manner of growth, and the commonest wild flowers. These were what were especially requested.

The Christmas ferns alluded to were merely the fronds, without roots, as might be concluded from the time of year when they were distributed (December). As to the twigs, they are small ones, not more than a foot or a foot and a half long; the only large branches we have received have come from the authorities of Central Park, who have always taken the greatest interest in our work and contributed most generously whenever appealed to.

We have gathered many of the "woodland flowers" referred to, but, as they have been taken without roots and from various localities, we fail to see any diminution of either plants or flowers as a result, although the members of the Committee have had many of the stations under observation for over ten years.

As has been seen, a large part of the material we receive comes from a distance, and is, in most cases, sent by intelligent flower lovers to whom our work appeals. With very few exceptions, the collections made in the immediate vicinity of the city are made by the Committee and as judiciously as possible.

The Committee has carefully considered the question of the preservation of our rarer wild flowers, and one reason for omitting the annual botanical flower show at the Normal College last year was that the rarer plants would naturally be collected for that. We would also state that especial effort is made to educate the various field classes, held under the auspices of the Commit-

tee, to see the necessity of protecting our least common wild flowers, if any are to be left about the city.

It may be of interest to state that eight members of the Committee are members of the Torrey Club.

Respectfully yours,

MABEL H. TAYLOR,

*Secretary of the Committee.*

NORMAL COLLEGE, September 24, 1901.

## NEWS ITEMS

Professor F. S. Earle, recently of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute, has entered upon his new duties as an Assistant Curator of the Museums of the New York Botanical Garden. Professor Earle will continue his special studies on the fungi.

The program for the autumn lectures to be delivered in the Museum Building of the New York Botanical Garden, Bronx Park, on Saturday afternoons at 4:30 o'clock, has been announced as follows :

October 12th, "Sunlight and Vegetation," by Dr. D. T. MacDougal.

October 19th, "Botany of the West Indies," by Dr. N. L. Britton.

October 26th, "Habits and Characteristics of Some of the Larger Marine Plants," by Dr. M. A. Howe.

November 2d, "Ancestral History of Some Living Trees," by Dr. C. A. Hollick.

November 9th, "Production of Cinchona Bark and Quinine in the East Indies," by Dr. H. H. Rusby.

November 16th, "Botanical Features of the Mountains of Colorado," by Dr. L. M. Underwood.

The lectures will be illustrated by lantern slides and otherwise. They will close in time for auditors to take the 5:38 train from Bronx Park railway station, arriving at Grand Central Station at 6:04.